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One intelligent ~~Indian~~ man went so far as to say that he was a better Christian than any white man because he believed every word in the Old Testament, ~~whereas~~ while he had heard that ~~many~~ white men doubted the historical accuracy of some of the stories there recorded.

The following incident illustrates rather clearly the attitude of the Bella Coola to the supernatural. A few years ago a party, consisting of a number of ~~Indians~~ natives and one white man, was proceeding by canoe up Dean Channel. On the shore, some distance ahead of them, they saw what seemed ~~to each member of the party~~ to be a Grizzly Bear with its pelt showing the white ~~xixxx~~ sheen so much desired by hunters. Hoping for a shot ~~at the animal~~, they ~~canoe was~~ paddled in behind a long point which offered a hidden means of approach. But as the ~~craft~~ canoe cautiously rounded the tip, within easy rifle range of the animal, all that could be seen was a ~~and~~ water-washed, ~~a~~ stump, somewhat resembling a bear in shape. To the white man it was obvious that they had all been deceived by this resemblance ~~in the distance~~, but to the ~~Indians~~ Bella Coola it was equally obvious that there ~~had been a~~ bear ~~which~~ had changed into a stump. ~~A bear had been there, they had seen it, now there was a stump~~:

"The bear must have changed itself," ~~they~~ he said.

If the reader grasps the mental attitude which explains an optical illusion as a manifestation of the supernatural, he will be able to ~~xixxxxixxx~~ comprehend the important part played by such ~~times of supernatural~~ beings in the lives of the Bella Coola. Creatures of this type, some anthropomorphic and others zoomorphic, range ~~not only~~ the mountains and forests of British Columbia, ~~but~~ and also the waters ~~beneath~~ and the sky ~~above~~. ~~In fact~~, Their home is on the flat country above the sky; most of them are mere visitors to this world. Supernatural beings of all kinds are termed siut. ~~xxxxxxxx~~ The attitude of the Indians towards ~~these beings~~ them, and their concepts concerning them, can best be understood by reading the stories in Chapters ~~XIV~~ IX and ~~XV~~ XV. Bella Coola beliefs are not systematized; if ~~an Indian~~ a man is asked ~~concerning~~ about the powers or functions of a certain supernatural being, he will usually answer by recounting a story

it appears. What is known
in which ~~that being occurs.~~ ~~The knowledge of an individual~~ respecting many of the
information contained in
lesser supernatural beings depends upon ~~his knowledge of~~ stories, ~~concerning them,~~ and
great
as many of these ~~stories~~ are personal possessions, ~~it follows that~~ there is ~~a men-~~
Psychologically, this is of little importance;
~~dous~~ variation in individual knowledge. ~~But the number of supernatural beings is so~~
~~great that the effect of individual knowledge or lack of knowledge is lessened;~~ there
are enough supernatural beings for everyone to know some of them, and to expect to
meet or hear them in the forests. ~~To insert~~ many of the stories contained in later
chapters would break the sequence of description; all that is here attempted is to
method
give a general summary, ~~in~~ a ~~way~~ foreign to Bella Coola thought.

Supernatural beings are by no means all-powerful. ~~It is true that~~ They have
to mankind; but
miraculous powers and can work weal or woe ~~on~~ x ~~human beings who chance to come in~~
~~contact with them,~~ ~~on the other hand~~ ~~but likewise~~ they ~~can~~ may sometimes be overwhelmed by ~~human beings~~ mortals
peculiarly
armed with objects ~~steeped in~~ human, ~~essence,~~ such as a blanket which has been worn
very physical being
until it is impregnated with ~~xxx~~ not only the smell but the ~~essence~~ of its owner. In
strength, conquer
particular, shamans or others ~~mortals~~ of great ~~power,~~ have been able to ~~overwhelm~~ them.
although
~~supernatural ones.~~ Consequently, it ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ may be said that super-
from but not
natural beings live on a plane different ~~to~~ that of mortals; ~~and~~ they are ~~often xx~~
omnipotent.
~~pertubed by human beings.xx~~ Long, long ago, man was able to come in contact with ~~su-~~
them more
~~pernatural beings~~ frequently, but that golden age when the semi-mythical ancestors of
~~though have the less,~~ however,
the Bella Coola were living has long since passed away. ~~But~~ It is only within the last
such beings,
few years that ~~the supernatural ones,~~ xxxx particularly ~~the~~ supernatural animals, have
become comparatively rare.
~~ceased to be in evidence.~~ The Bella Coola give three main reasons for this:

~~(1).~~ Supernatural animals do not like the sound of muskets and have moved far
away;

~~(2).~~ ~~W~~With ~~the~~ increasing dependence ~~of the Indians~~ on the canning industry, few-
their haunts in the
er hunters penetrate into ~~the~~ distant parts of the mountains; and

~~(3).~~ The younger Bella Coola no longer take pains to purify ~~themselves so that~~
as a means of
placating
supernatural beings. ~~are likely to appear.~~

According to the detailed description of the supernatural beings which may be classified as Anthropomorphic Beings, Zoomorphic Beings, and Supernatural Members of the Vegetable and Mineral Kingdoms.

Anthropomorphic Beings.

There is no uncertainty in the minds of the Bella Coola as to who is the most important of their supernatural beings. He is Älquntäm, the supreme deity, maker of men and animals. Älquntäm is the name by which he is most commonly known, but he has other appelations with reference to his various functions. The Indians say that the word Älquntäm is derived from lxquntäm, "foreman", or "chief". He is chief of the supernatural beings, hence the application to him.

Other names by which he is known are as follows: —

Sinxälotla, a word derived from sinx, the Sun. This term is used almost as commonly as Älquntäm.

Smaiaikila, "The Story Man." The significance of this term is that Älquntäm created the ancestral myths at the same time that he created mankind. Smaiaikila is the term used for the supreme deity with reference to his membership in the kusiut society of the supernatural beings.

Smaialotla, "From whom come, and to whom belong, all myths." As creator of the highly valued myths, the supreme deity is owner of them.

Snuslkäls, "The Wise One," or "The Thoughtful", or "The One with great mental ability."

Minakais. A term supposedly derived from män, "Father", with the suffix kais as a term of endearment. This is the term used when praying to Älquntäm.

Tätä, "Father", the term for father used by a child; this, like the last, is used in prayer.

Nonodjonostem, "The Adviser."

Nuxekmälsaix, "The Light Giver."

O·tlo̱q di Staltemx, "The Moon Chief."

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These names are not meaningless synonyms; all, or at any rate most of them, are carefully used in accordance with the functions of this supreme deity. As a Bella Coola has many names, corresponding to his membership in various societies, his professional prerogatives, his ancestral myths, and mere nick-names, so has Älquntäm, who is a super-man, many names according to his special functions. It would be unthinkable for a Bella Coola to pray to Älquntäm, yet it is common for him to pray to Mınakais or Tätä, other names for the same being. This multiplicity of functions and designations approaches the point of obscuring the unity of Älquntäm, which In fact, some Bella Coola even doubt this; deny they state that Sınxälotla, Mınakais, Smaılotla and Nuxeknälsaix are one, but that Älquntäm, Snuslkäls, and Nonodjonostem are three distinct supernatural beings. This confusion, for so it seems to the white man, presents no difficulties to the Indian, since for each family has its own myths in which such facts are recorded. He believes these, without questioning those of his neighbour, and it is even possible for an individual to believe two contradictory statements, if he happens to become the owner of two contradictory myths. From evidence collected in the field, the writer is unable to state whether the beliefs of the Bella Coola indicate represent the beginnings of fission from a belief in one supreme deity, or whether they represent the almost complete fusion of a number of beings into one. Following the practice of the great majority of the Indians, in this monograph the writer proposes to refer to the supreme deity as Älquntäm.

The most obvious attribute of Älquntäm is connected with the sun. He can enter it and use it as if it were his canoe. In form he resembles a man, and when he takes charge of the sun it appears as if the latter was like a large, self-propelling boat with windows through which he looks forth. It is said that long ago the sun allowed the Mink to take charge of the sun, but the malicious animal ran it so close to earth that the intense heat killed almost all living creatures. When Älquntäm enters the sun he wears a cloak on the lining of which are salmon; and when he reverses this it causes the rivers on earth to teem with salmon. Älquntäm is occasionally, but in

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but
and inaccurately, called Sînx, the Sun.

Though Älquntäm often sojourns in the sun, his home is a huge house in the flat land above the sky, which figures prominently both in Bella Coola mythology and present day thought. The name of the house is Nusmät·a. It resembles those constructed of human beings, but except that it is boundless in size. Like the houses, its name is changed according to what is taking place within. Every autumn the supernatural beings gather there to await the coming of Älquntäm at the winter solstice; while waiting they pass the time by performing the equivalent of the earthly kusiut dances. (See page ...) This assemblage is termed qolxwaix, and the house, during this period, Nusqulxwaista.

The following names, of the house, with meanings, were obtained:

Nusmät·a, "The Place of Myths;"

Nusqwatlnaista, "Where Everything was Begun;"

Nusk·älnîmsta, "The Place Whence Came the Falling Down;"

Nustîmnänîmsta, "The Place Where Mankind was Made;"

Nusälquntämsta, "The Place where Älquntäm Speaks;"

Nusqulxwaista, "The Place of the [illegible];"

Nusqskunsta, "The Place of Meeting," or "The Council House;"

Nutsaqäls, (? Meaning) ; and

Inuxwotskäls, "The Moving House." The significance of this last name rests on an ancient myth in which the house is described as travelling from place to place.

To grasp the significance of these designations it is necessary to understand the beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the creation. Their mythology contains no account of the origin or birth of Älquntäm himself, nor of the making of this world; but in the beginning of time no living creature, either animal or vegetable, existed with the exception of Älquntäm. He, therefore, decided to alter and populate the world and accordingly created four supernatural carpenters. They in turn made a number of wor-

(1. See page ...)

~~1938~~

kers, älqwatltuntutl nunuqomaxmalx. These beings, endowed with enormous power by Älquntäm, chiselled from wood a number of human beings, the forefathers of mankind. ~~Coola.~~ Some Indians state that this was actually done by the four Carpenters, but the consensus of opinion seems to be that they were merely supervisors. No explanation is given of the means used by Älquntäm to give life to the beings thus created. The workers ~~created~~ made not only human bodies, but ~~they~~ constructed the mentality, including the speech ~~of each~~. Nusmät'a contains a large number of rooms, in each of which a different set of Indians, with a different ~~speech~~ language, was manufactured; thus explaining the diversity of tongues among the people of British Columbia. The ~~workers~~ Carpenters did not confine their attention to ~~human beings~~ men and women, ~~Supernatural beings~~, animals, birds, trees, flowers, fish, mountains, rivers, moon and stars, all were created almost simultaneously by the ~~workers~~ under the direction of Älquntäm ~~and his Carpenters~~ in Nusmät'a. The Sunalone was not made ~~by~~ in this ~~mode~~ way. Älquntäm chose the proper plumage or fur for each ~~man~~ bird and animal, ~~and~~ which the Carpenters ~~and workers~~ painted and carved according to his instructions. As they provided men with different languages, so they furnished the birds and beasts with ~~xxxx~~ their speech which men can no longer understand. Each was ~~provided with~~ given the necessary tools for existence on the earth below; sharp incisors ~~for~~ to the Beaver, strong talons ~~for~~ to the Eagle, a penetrating eye ~~for~~ to the Heron, and so on. The Bella Coola do not regard birds and animals as being of a lower order than themselves; all were created by the same power, ~~and~~ at the same time, and in many respects the Indians consider that they, ~~so-called lower orders~~ belong to a higher plane. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ It would be too great a digression to include at this point a number of myths describing the creation, but these will be found in Chapters VI and XIV.

Mythology does not record in detail the sending down to this earth of the trees and plants, nor of the forefathers of other Indian tribes; but the manner in which the first Bella Coola ~~reached the earth~~ arrived is clearly stated. Around the walls of Nusmät'a ~~were hanging~~ hung a number of bird and animal cloaks, representing Raven, Eagle, Whale, Grizzly Bear, Black Bear and a few others. Älquntäm asked each ~~man or woman~~ individual which

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of these cloaks he preferred to wear. One chose a Raven, another ~~an~~ Eagle, and so on. Each lifted his choice from the wall and put it on, immediately becoming the bird or animal chosen. Älquntäm gave each individual one or more names, and some food in compressed form, and sent him down below in avian or mammal form. Even the animals could travel through the air like birds, and each landed on the peak of a mountain in the Bella Coola country, took off his cloak, and resumed human form. The discarded cloaks floated back up to Nusmät'a. A few individuals, instead of coming to earth in animal form, swarmed down the posts which stretched between the worlds.

This myth is believed in by the Bella Coola with intense fervour. Even Christian Indians, though they readily admit the biblical story of creation as applied to the white race, remain convinced of the manner in which their own ancestors came into being. At the present time the ancient beliefs are rapidly passing away, but the writer found few, if any, Bella Coola who doubted the accuracy of the account of the creation of their forefathers. The reason for this firm conviction rests not only on the religious aspect of their life, but on the sociological. The most treasured possessions of an Indian are the name brought down from above by his ancestor in the beginning of time, and the actual knowledge of the form taken by that ancestor and information about the place where he landed. A collection of myths of this kind are given in Chapter VI. Lacking knowlegge of his first ancestor's form, a Bella Coola has slight chance of becoming a chief; such lore is the birthright of every descendant of one of these first people, and those without such lore are almost certain to be the descendants of slaves. The sociological aspects of creation myths will be described later, at this point a broad outline must suffice. Nusmät'a, The House of Myths, is the place in which these myths were made, and are stored, two reasons for its importance in the eyes of the Bella Coola.

Nusmät'a is not only connected with the history of an individual's ancestors, it enters into his own future. When a Bella Coola dies, his

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spirit
~~xxxxxxx~~ (1) travels back on the path of his ancestors from generation to generation until it reaches the spot where the first ~~ancestor~~ one came to earth; there it assumes the bird or animal cloak used on that occasion and floats aloft to Nusmät'a to live forever. Small wonder Therefore that this house figures prominently in the thoughts of the Bella Coola, and that they cling tenaciously to a belief in it.

Knowledge of Nusmät'a ~~is derived~~ has been inherited almost entirely from the first ancestors of the Bella Coola, and only a few items of information could be ~~learnt~~ gleaned concerning it. ~~As has been stated,~~ Most Indians think of it as an enormous replica of their own houses, but one man, of philosophic temperament, expressed the opinion that it was without any inner partitions ~~or walls within.~~ His belief was based on the following incident:

Some fifty years ago a young lad died without apparent reason, leaving his father to mourn his loss. The sorrowing father kept wondering:

"Why has my son died? Can he have committed some crime or made some mistake?"

Despondent and grief-stricken, for a whole year the father did not wash, ate but little, and slept on the floor. At last he wandered away alone into the mountains. Night overtook him and he lay down to sleep without food. His son came to him in a dream, telling him not to lament, that he was in a better place than this world, ~~that~~ for Äquntäm had recalled him to Nusmät'a to use his voice, ~~which was~~ unusually powerful, ~~as a means of~~ for conveying his wishes to the other occupants of the house. Thus comforted, the father returned home in the morning, washed, and again behaved like a normal individual. My informant suggested that ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ cross walls would be a battle stronghold ~~hamper any~~ to voice, and that Nusmät'a must ~~accordingly~~ consequently be partitionless. This belief ~~was~~ is a ~~mere~~ individual ~~idiosyncrasy~~, opinion not held by the Indians in general.

Nusmät'a contains not only the ~~xxxx xxxxxxx~~ spirits of all deceased Bella Coola, ~~but~~ it is also the home of ~~the~~ most of the supernatural beings. These frequently descend to visit the earth, but always return to the house above. So far as the writer ~~is aware~~ could learn the only

(1). See page .

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being irremovably located there is an old woman, Snuɬqulx̌als. The most prominent article of furniture in Nusmät'a is Äɬquntäm's seat, in the central position behind the fire. Over it is laid what is probably a moose-hide, painted with salmon, symbolic of his guardianship of fish for the benefit of mankind. In other respects Nusmät'a has no peculiarities. Behind the house is an enormous tree, Tx̌ɛnx̌ɛn'iaqim, in the branches of which live innumerable owls.

After this description of Nusmät'a, it is possible to return to its master, Äɬquntäm. Guiding the sun is his most spectacular occupation, but he also governs the movements of moon and tides. Powerful though he is, he continues to take an interest in the doings of mankind whom he created. Prayers are commonly addressed to him, and a certain type of shaman is believed to receive power direct from him. Other supernatural beings may work weal or woe to a Bella Coola, but he feels it is done with the sanction of Äɬquntäm. At every winter solstice he enters Nusmat a where supernatural beings from all parts of the universe have gathered to greet him. This assembly is called qulxwaix, and Nusmät'a is termed Nusqulxwaista for its duration. While waiting, the guests perform kusiut dances, similar to those carried out by members of the kusiut society on earth.(1) At Äɬquntäm's entry the heat becomes so intense that the occupants rush forth precipitously, some falling and being trampled upon in thecrush. Only three advisers, including Sɛxsɛx̌'älaix,(2) remain to confer with him. They arrange the fate of human beings during the coming year; who shall be made a kusiut, who shall be born, who shall die. In each case the decision rests with Äɬquntäm though he is often influenced by his counɛillors. Human beings can often learn in dreams what is being decided for them.

Äɬquntäm, in spite of his strength,

(1). See chapter XI.
(2). See p. 41.

~~being irremovably located there i~~ woman, ~~Snulqulmis~~. Behind ~~the~~ house is an enormous tree, Txlnxlniaqim, in the branches of which live innumerable owls. ~~Cmxxxx~~

~~After this description of Nusmät'a, it is possible to return to its master,~~ Älquntäm. ~~His~~ His guidance of the sun is his most spectacular occupation, but he also governs the movements of ~~the~~ moon and tides. ~~But~~ Powerful though he ~~is~~ he, he ~~shares the limitations of the supernatural ones of whom he is chief~~ continues to take an interest in the doings of ~~mankind~~ men whom he created. Prayers are commonly addressed to him, and a certain type of shaman is believed to receive ~~his~~ power direct from him. Other supernatural beings may work weal or woe to a Bella Coola, but he feels it is done with the sanction of Älquntäm. ~~But, xxxxxfuxxthxxghxhxxixxxxälquntäm~~ In spite of his strength, ~~powers~~ ability, he shares the limitations of any other chief, and is not ~~always~~ invariably successful. The Bella Coola delight in telling stories of how supernatural beings, ~~and~~ especially ~~the~~ Raven, outwitted and defeated Älquntäm. ~~And~~ Even human beings, in the beginning of time when they were semi-supernatural, sometimes prevailed against him. One story actually records his murder. ~~Regarding~~ From the viewpoint of morality, an angle from which the Bella Coola themselves do not regard him, Älquntäm is neither moral nor immoral; he ~~i~~ has the virtues and vices of a man. ~~That, in fact,~~ The writer believes ~~to be a fair~~ summing up of Älquntäm; he is a super-man, creator of life, ~~mxtxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxfuxx~~ ~~dx~~ supreme god in the sense that he is chief of ~~the~~ supernatural beings, but not an all-powerful deity.

By comparison with Älquntäm, other supernatural beings fade ~~pale~~ into insignificance. The Bella Coola do not recognise ~~as having~~ in them definitely graded rank ~~and~~ or power; ~~so it is immaterial~~ accordingly, it is immaterial in which order they are described. Reference has already been made to the Supernatural Carpenters, (1) ~~so it will be convenient to describe them in greater detail~~. There ~~are~~ were four of ~~these beings~~ them, created, as described above, by Älquntäm in the beginning of time ~~It~~ was they who constructed the mountains and rivers of this land, and the animals and birds populating them, and supervised the making of mankind. They are

(1). Cf. Boas, p. 32.

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